

# STOREFRONT

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97 Kenmare Street New York, NY 10012 212-431-5795



Zvi Hecker, *Spiral*, Apartment House in Ramat-Gan, Israel.

## EXHIBITION

**Zvi Hecker**

*Spiral, Serpent and Sunflower*

October 24-November 18, 1989

Wed.-Sat. 12-6pm, Tuesday 12-8pm

Born in Cracow, Poland, and having lived in Siberia and Samarkand, before settling in Tel Aviv, Zvi Hecker is an architect whose works form a mosaic of eastern traditions and western classicism. Indicative of his orchestration of regional experiences, the Hexaterrace (Dubiner Apartment House in Ramat-Gan, Israel, 1961-63) is in the tradition of Arab villages which organize randomness of individual buildings into a collective that reflects the larger order of the social structure. The City Hall of Bat-Yam (1959-63) is a reinterpretation of prototypical Greek temple, sheltering the complex inner spaces under a single roof.

Hecker's recent projects are organic, making the polyhedral elements always present in his work even bolder. *Spiral, Serpent and Sunflower* are experiments to generate organic entities from inorganic matters. Although he looks to nature for prototypical sources, the works should not be considered as organic merely because their organic illusions. The organicism is the inceptive notion for his works, to be disintegrated with the emergence of architecture. In this sense Hecker's works lie between that of Imre Makovecz and Shin Takamatsu; the former reveres the order of nature, and the latter extracts the structure of machines.

During the past five years of construction of the *Spiral*, Hecker has spent an equal amount of time at the site as in the office. Through the parallel state of design and construction, he was able to experiment with materials and their applications, such as the reuse of broken scrap mirrors from a nearby glass shop, intuitive patterning of indigenous stones, and defiant locations of corrugated metals. To include construction as an equally significant chapter of architecture, Hecker is a part of an organic tradition in the works of Gaudi, Wright, Kahn, Makovecz and Soleri.

As for his commitment as an architect, Hecker is fearsome. At the completion of the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering Building at the Technion University in Haifa (1966), the building remained unpainted of the various colors that were integral to Hecker's concept. In protest, Hecker himself attacked the walls with a paint brush, to the embarrassment of the official guests at the grand opening. Shortly afterwards, the Technion again proclaimed the building "finished;" but this time ordinary glass had been installed instead of the windows Hecker had designed for proper lighting of the laboratories. Unwilling to compromise, Hecker smashed all the windows one dark night, and was subsequently jailed for his action. The windows were later replaced to fulfill his original design.

This exhibition will present Hecker's recent projects. They are: *Spiral*, Apartment House in Ramat-Gan, Israel, designed 1981-84, constructed 1984-89; *Serpent*, The Museum of Art in Palm Springs, California, designed 1986; *Sunflower*, Ramat-Hasharon City Center, Israel, designed 1986-88. They will be presented with drawings, models, photos and texts.

**Zvi Hecker will speaking at the following institutions:**

Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture.....Wed., October 25/12pm  
Parson School of Design.....Wed., October 25/4pm  
City College of New York, Shepherd Hall.....Tues., October 26/12pm

*Spiral, Serpent and Sunflower* was made possible in part with special support from the OSG Foundation.

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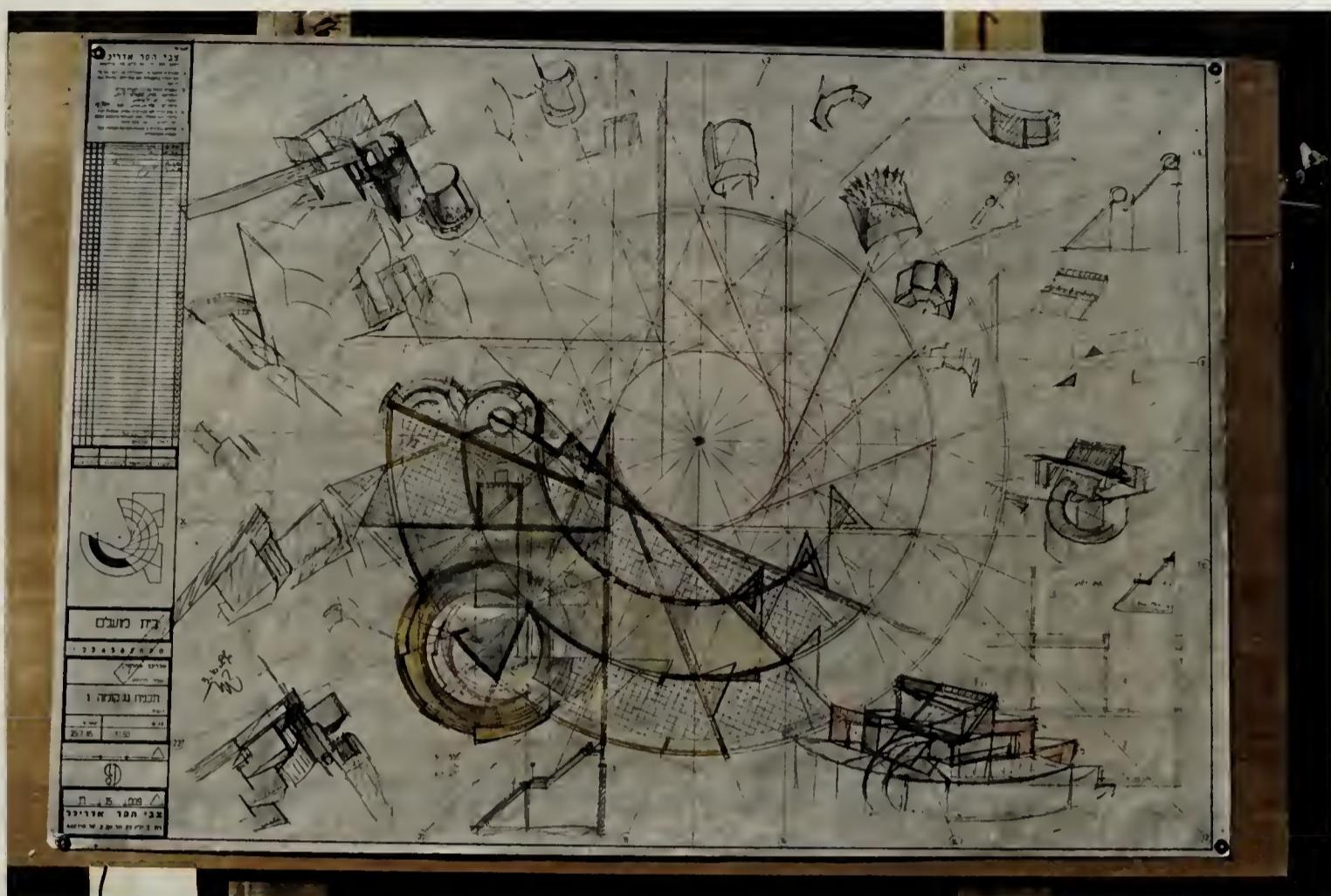
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A faint, grayscale background image of a spiral-bound notebook, showing its spiral binding and the edges of the pages.

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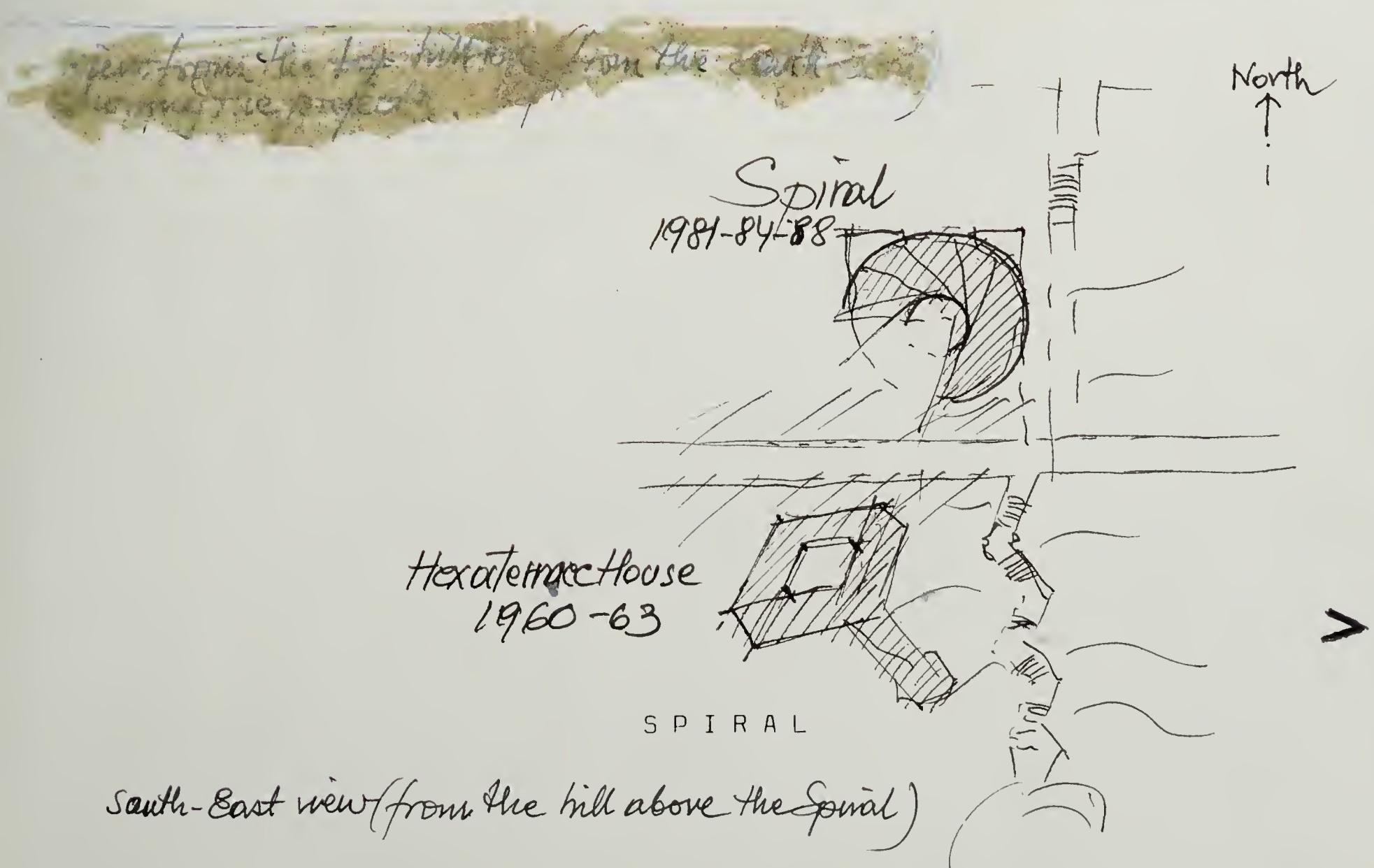
[https://archive.org/details/198910\\_spiralser00unse](https://archive.org/details/198910_spiralser00unse)



color pencils on blueprint.  
working drawing scale 1:50  
Eight floor. 1988.

S P I R A L

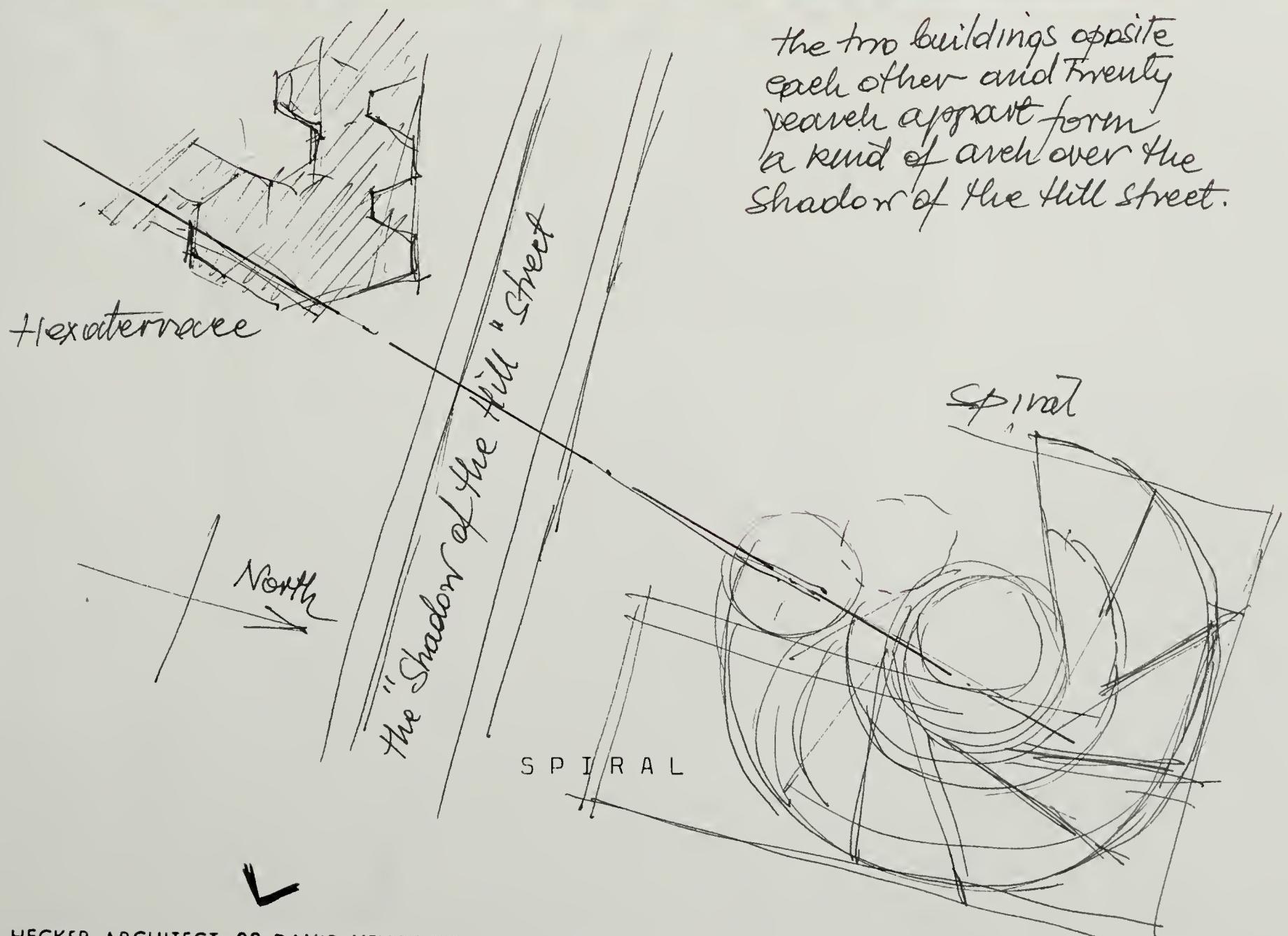








the two buildings opposite each other and twenty piers appear to form a kind of arch over the shadow of the hill street.





4E 2 77°



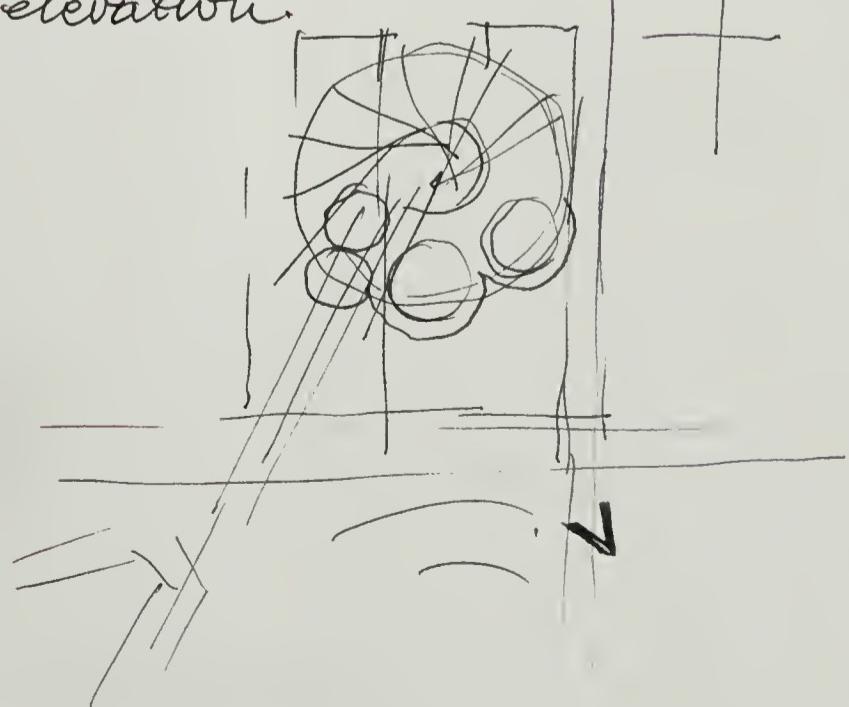
A strange and  
coincidental  
similarity in  
use of the  
static and  
dynamic  
elements



Cerere by Piranesi

the main entrance  
elevation.

S P I R A L



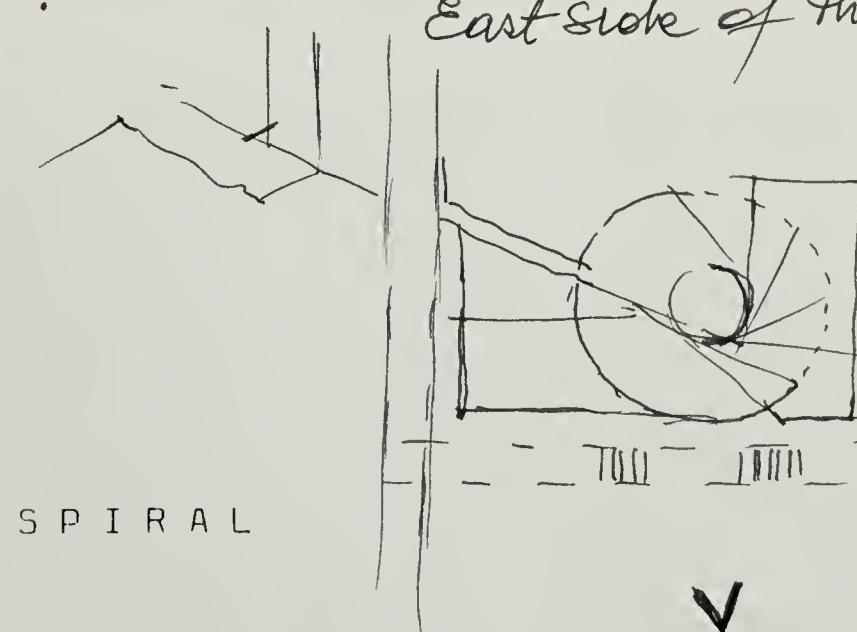


Hexaterrace



public  
walkway

East side of the Spiral



→ North

public  
walkway  
stairs



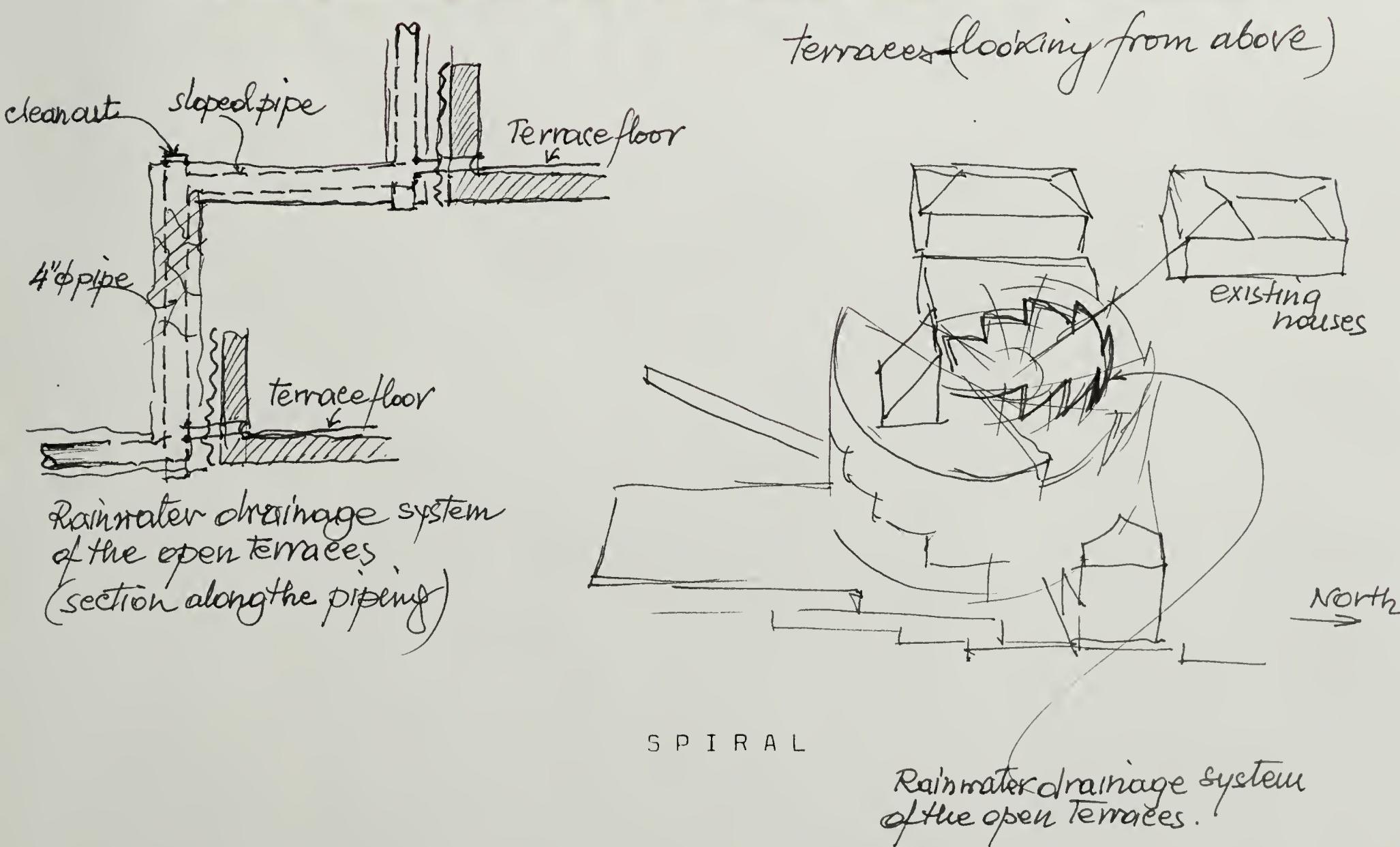


view from the north

S P I R A L

↓  
North

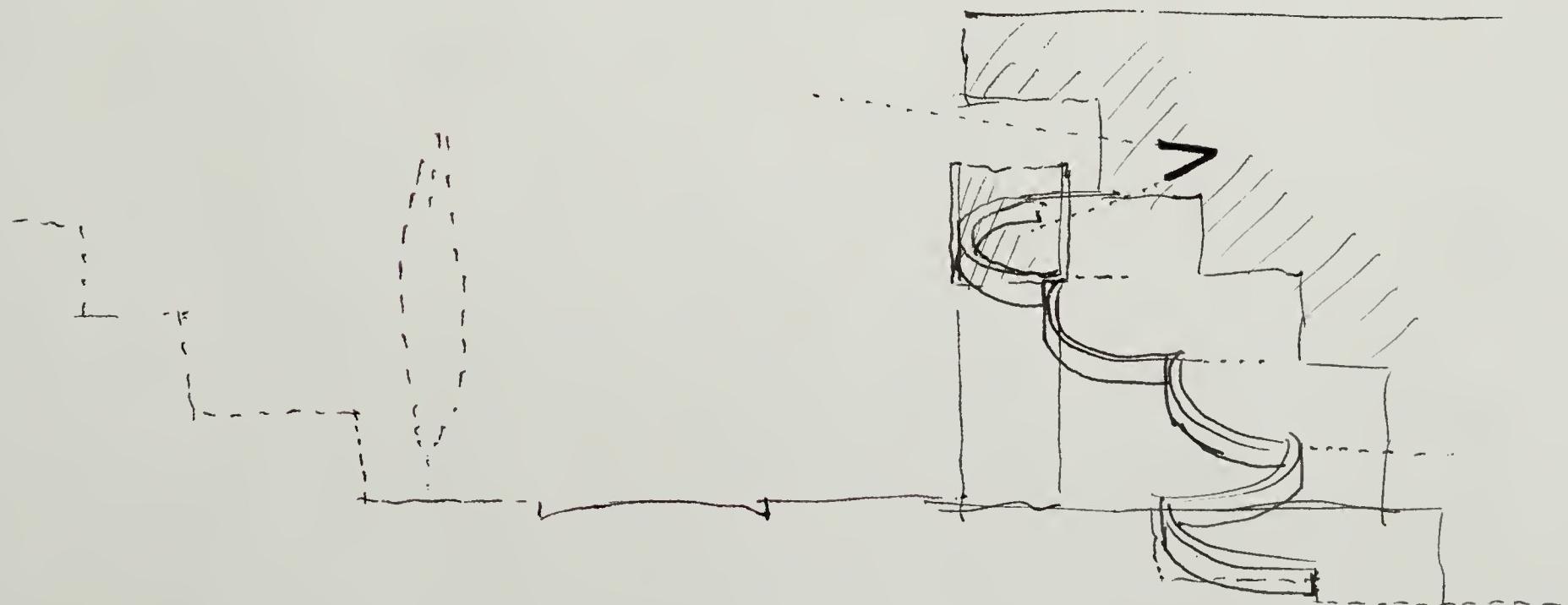








stairs leading to the seventh floor  
 (on the background of the Hexaterrace  
 house on the other side of the  
 street.)



S P I R A L

section through  
 the spiral





Looking upwards  
stone, concrete, plaster  
and mirror cast into  
the concrete ceiling form  
a kind of to a large serpent

## S P I R A L





Detail of the surface  
metallic steels,  
plaster  
slate stone and mirrors,  
imprinted into the wet plaster.

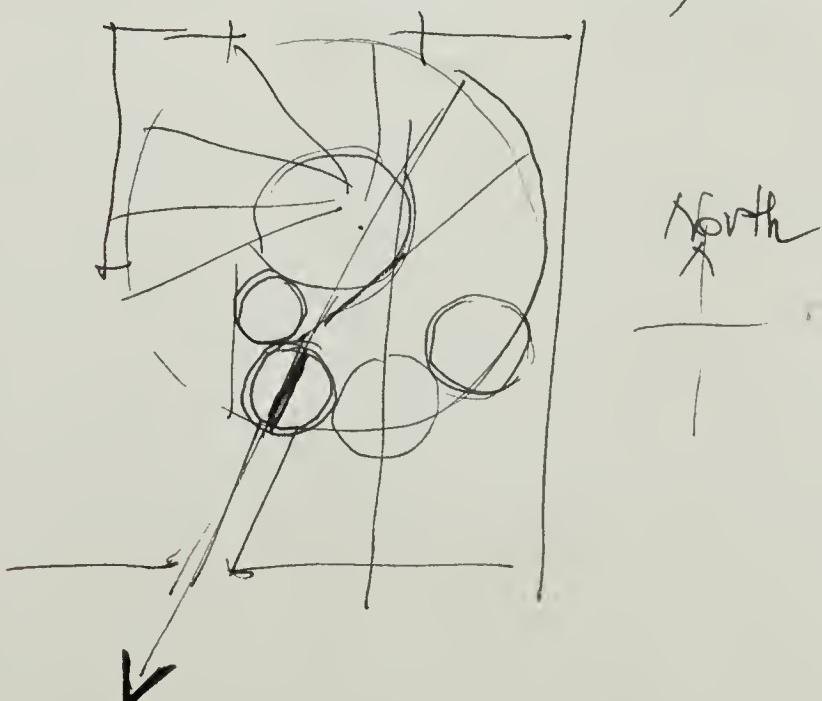
### S P I R A L





*the main pedestrian entrance to the Spiral*

S P I R A L





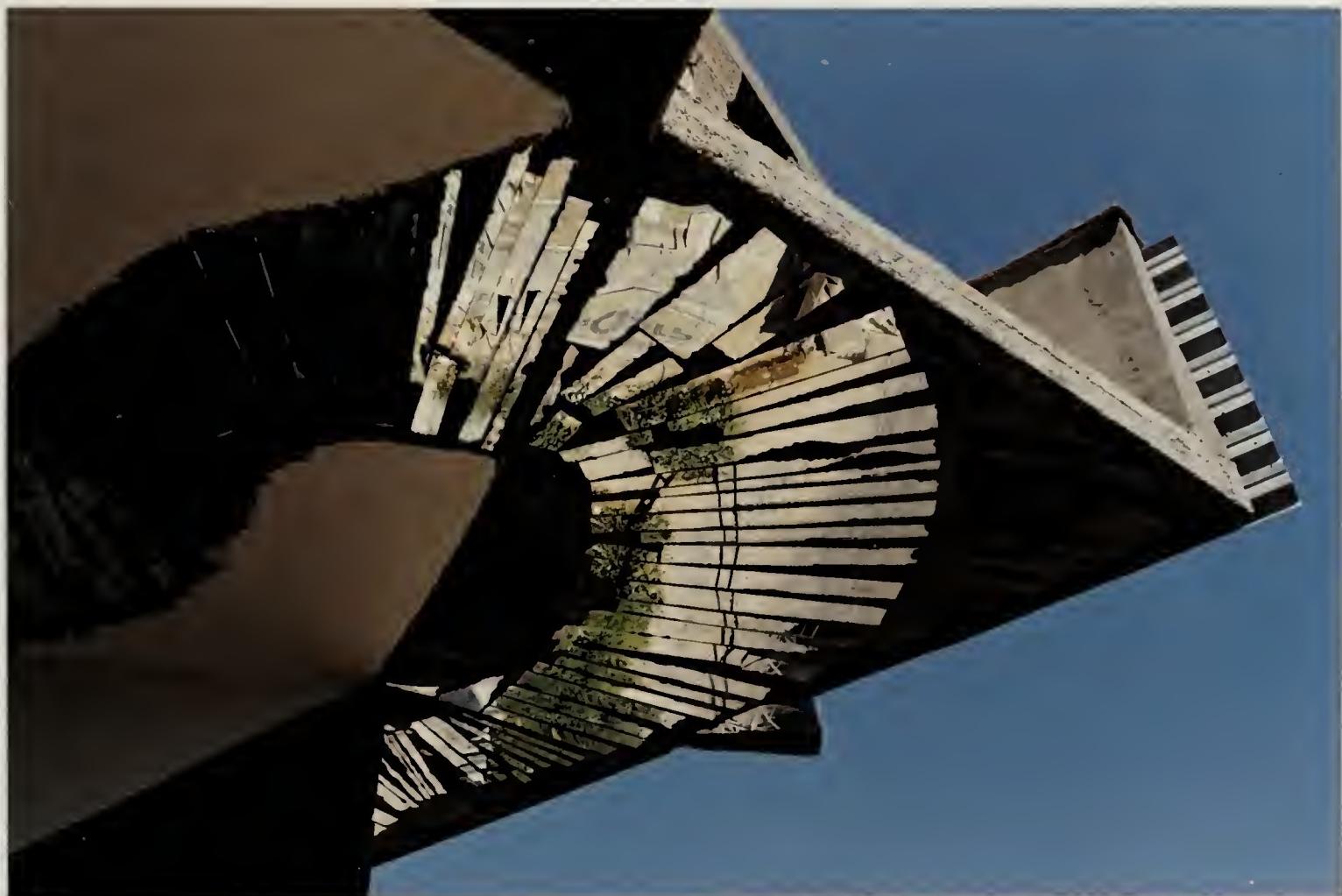


Interior court-yard  
upwards looking view

26  
239-6

S P I R A L

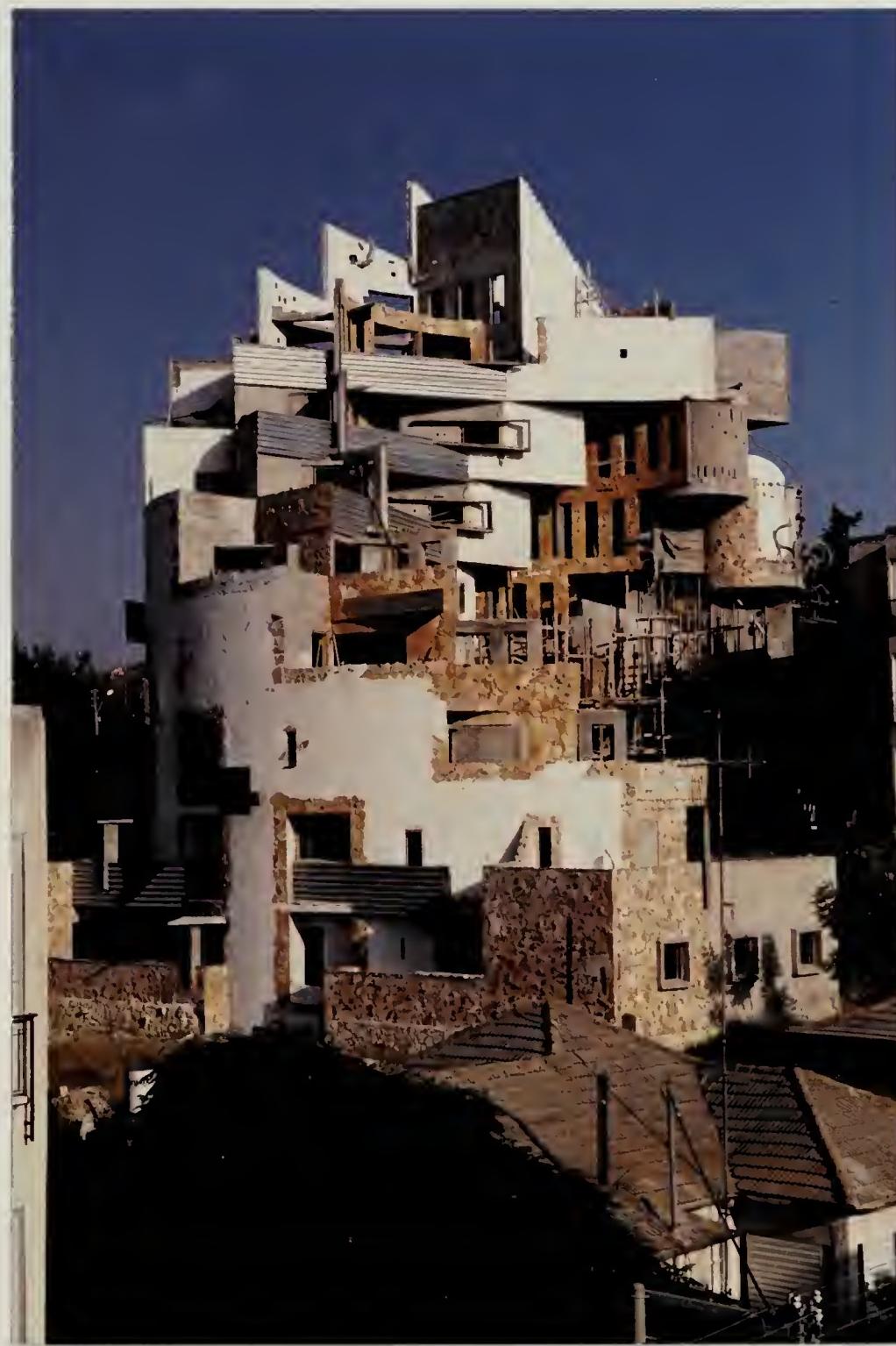
HEKLER - 2 P



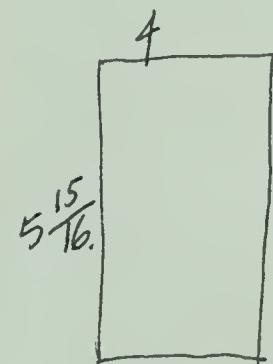
*Detail of the large  
mirror Serpent.  
Broken ~~or pieces~~ or cut off  
strips of mirrors collected*

### S P I R A L



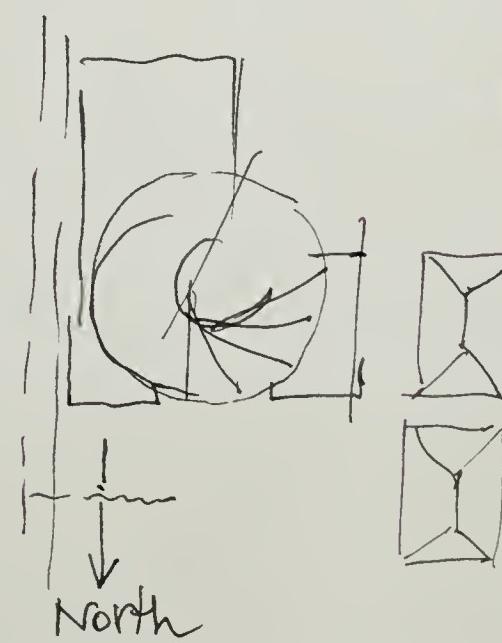


HECKER - 1P



view the Northwest

S P I R A L



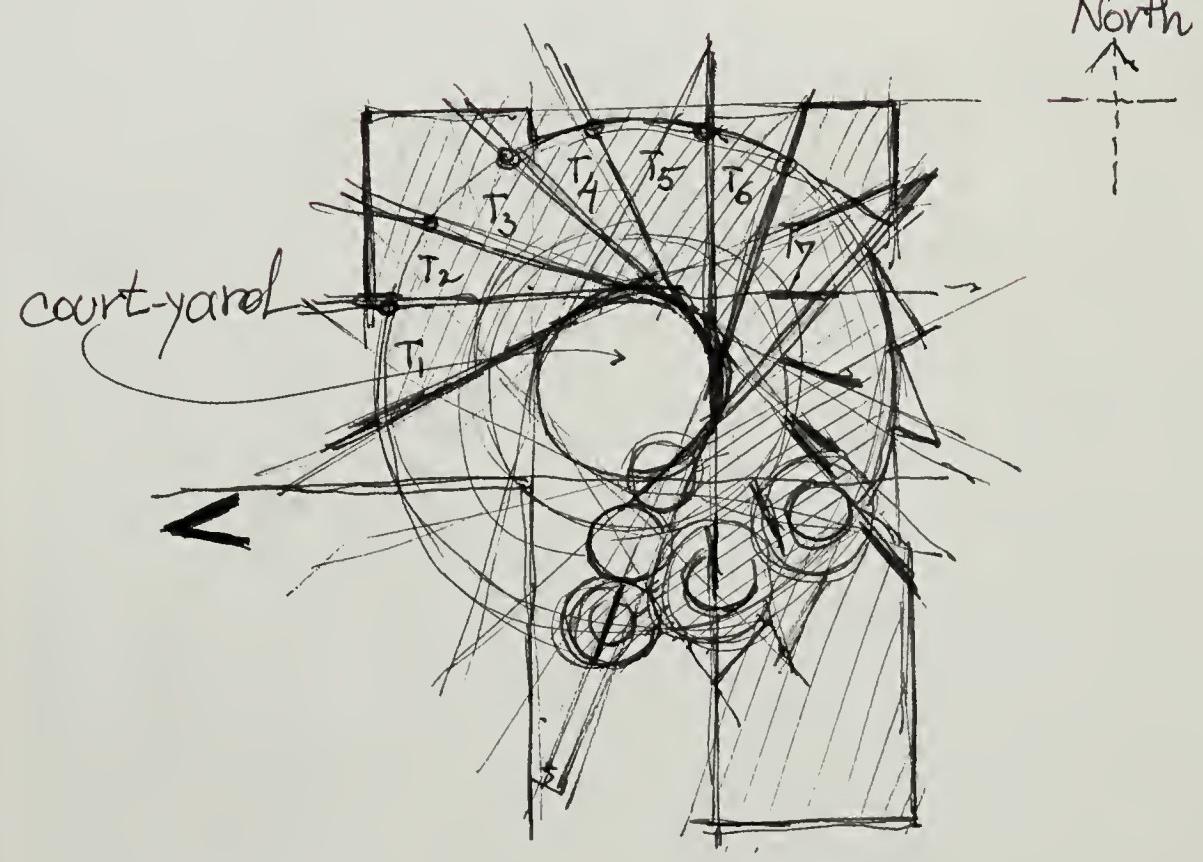




Interior court-yard.

~~67%~~

HECKER - 3P



S P I R A L





Red slate stone  
from the Salfit quarry  
forty klm. from Ramat-Gan  
used extensively in the Spiral.

#### S P I R A L





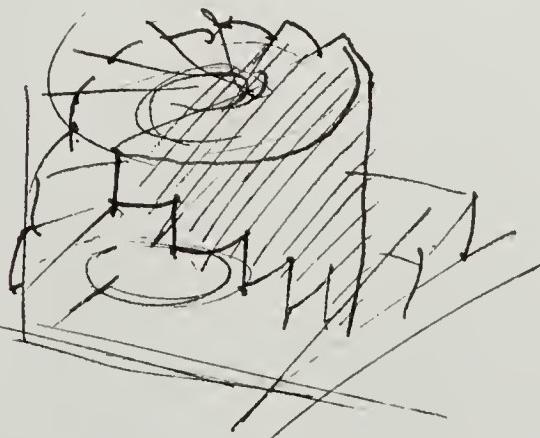
Self-reflected image  
within the mirrors of  
the large Serpent  
Seventh floor.

## S P I R A L





*The Mediterranean Sea*



SPIRAL

*view from the hilltop.*

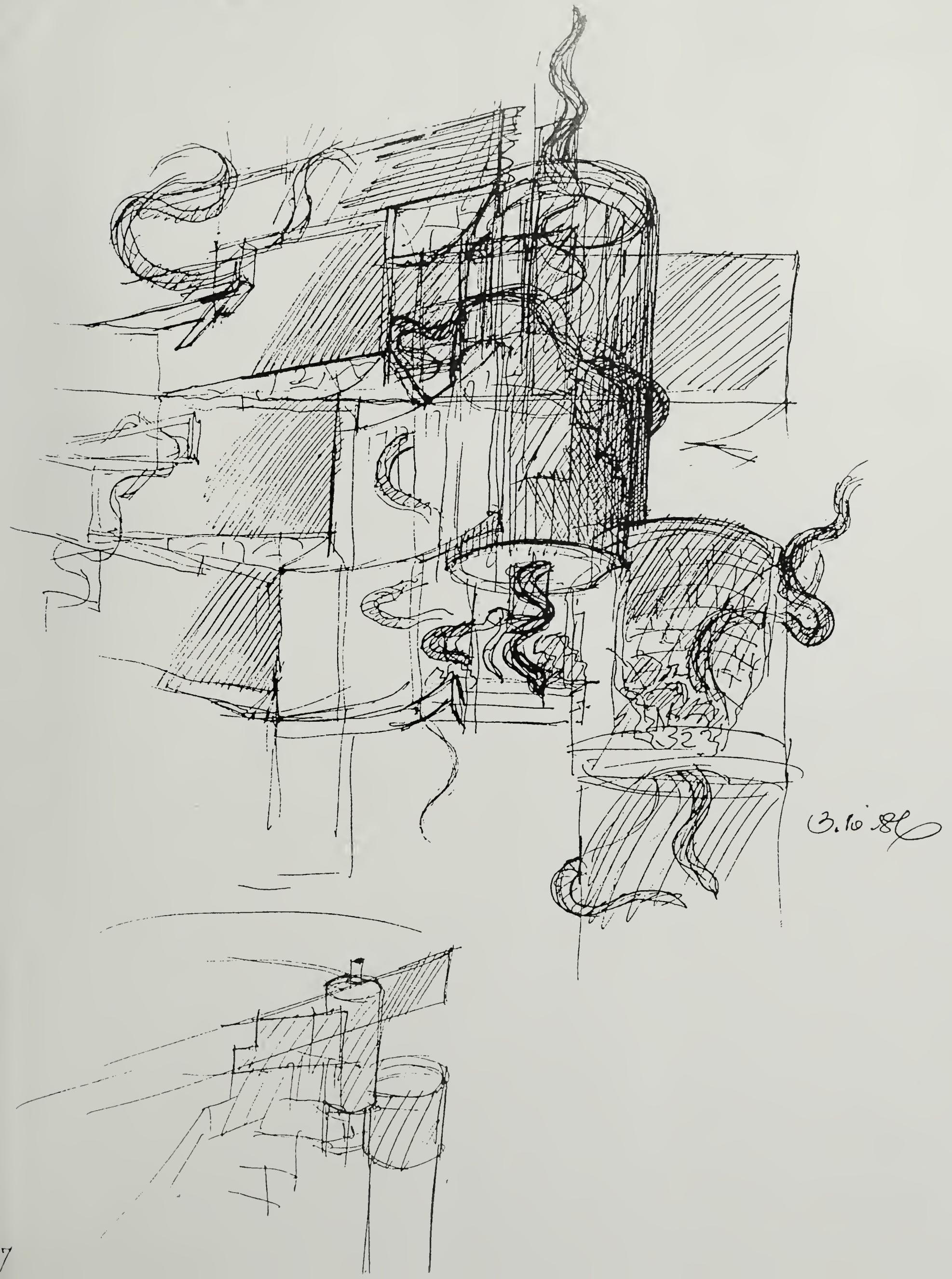




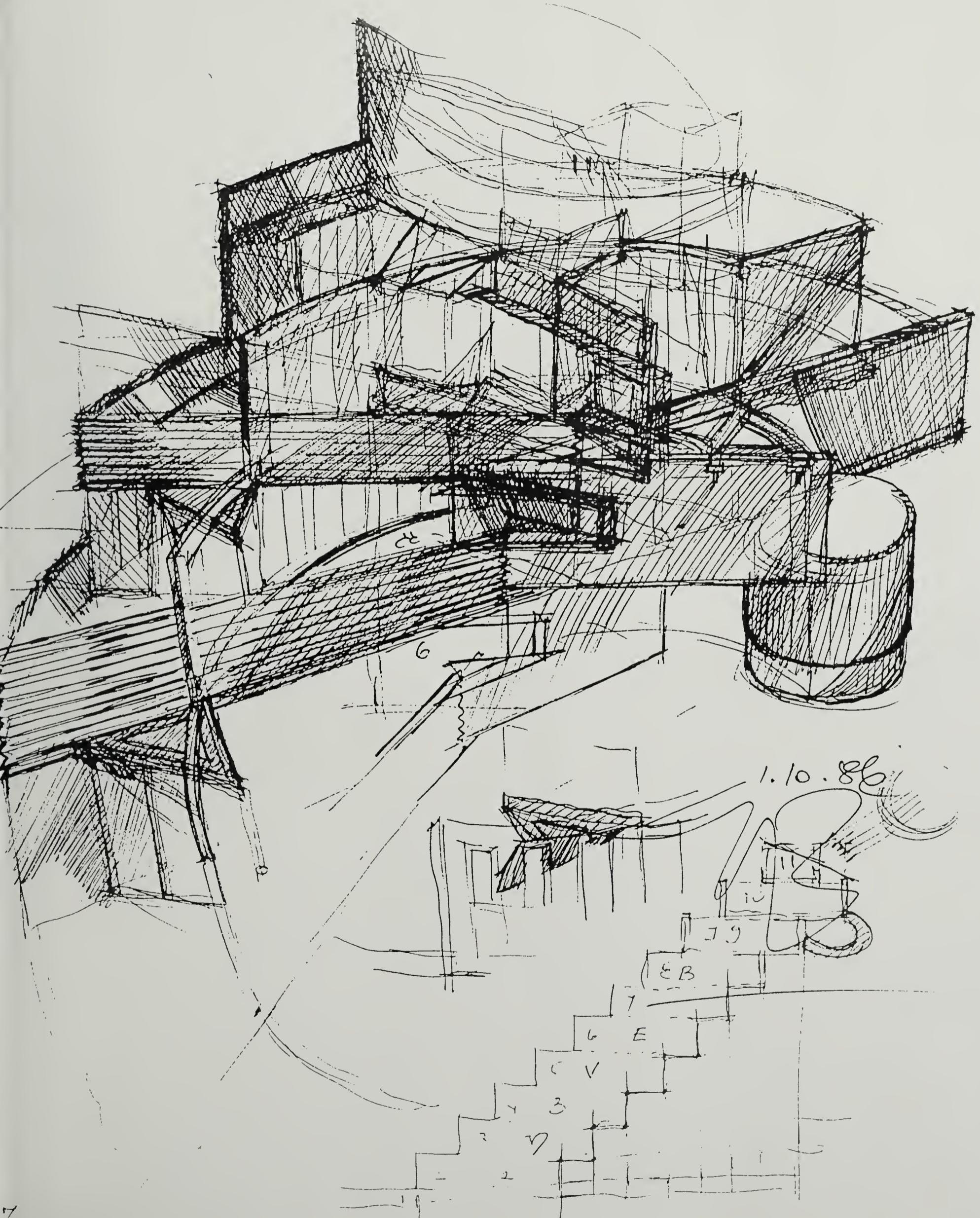
Farhy - the arab worker  
photographed on the  
background of a stone wall  
reflected in a mirror of  
another stone wall.

S P I R A L

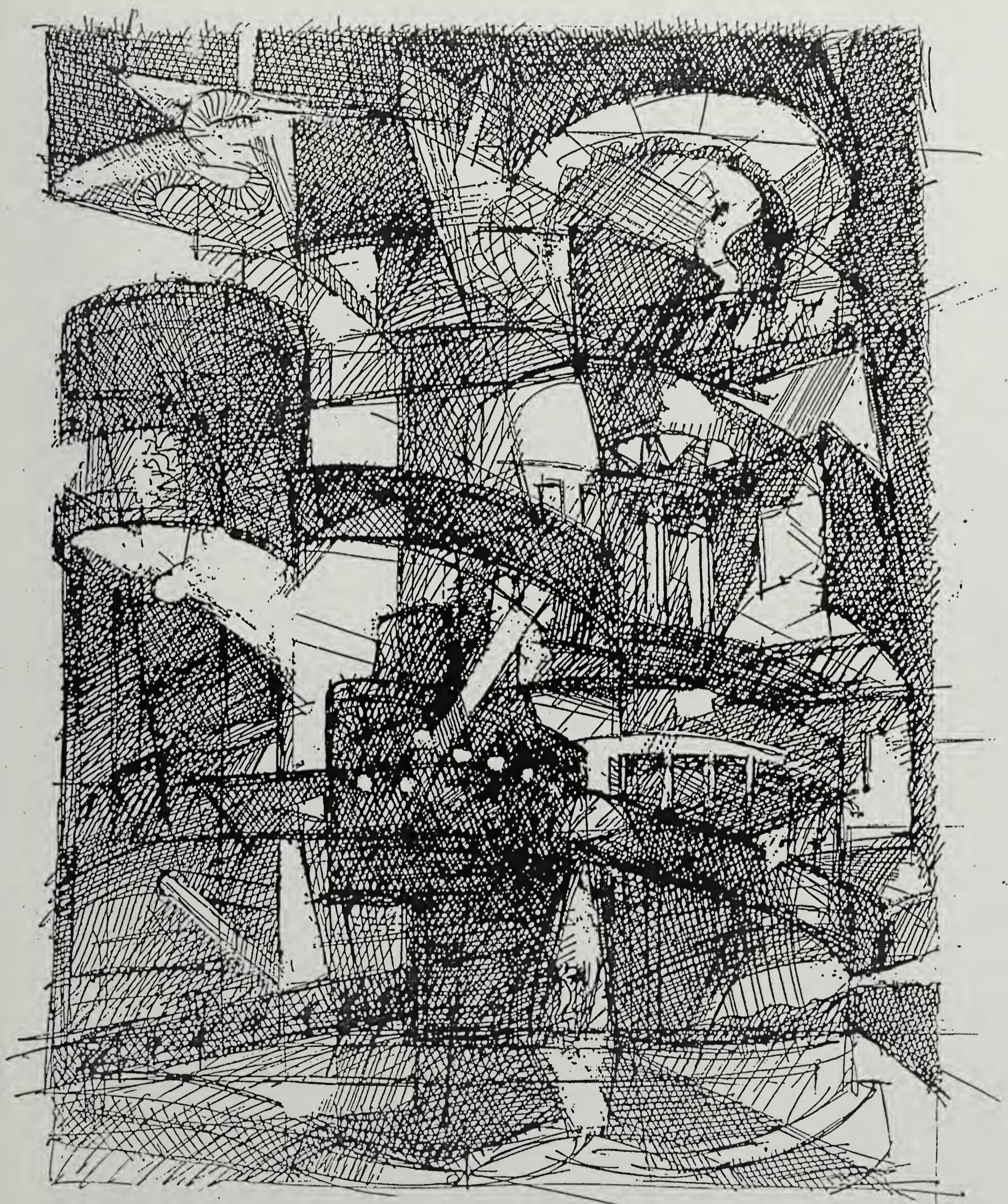














## THE SPIRAL

### Historical and Vernacular Affinity.

The Spiral is structurally contemporary, sensually Baroque, and ornamentally Islamic. Its roots reach the phoenician monolithic construction, the Arab flat-roof-terrace tradition, and the Middle East ever present court-yard pattern.

The Spiral, has no use of the bilateral symmetry of the static classical architecture. It is activated by the Futurist rotational symmetry only. It also makes use of the Russian constructivist coherence, though disguised and orientalized.

The closest in spirit to the Spiral seems to be Jaques Tati's picturesque and genuinely organic dwelling, in his 1950's film "Mon Oncle".



## THE SPIRAL

### 1. Early Designs.

Since the early sixties we have been investigating the traditional Arab -Roof Terrace usage, looking for the ways it could be incorporated into the contemporary compact residential form. The architectural implication of this concept, was first manifested in 1963 in the Hexaterrace Apartment House in Ramat-Gan. Organized around a central courtyard, in a shifting formation of floors, it creates multitude of open and semi enclosed terraces.

Simultaneously we have explored the usefulness of helical and spiral forms for residential architecture, particularly with regard of their potential to assimilate the open terrace concept.

This work was summed-up in 1966-67, in what we have called "Spiral Housing". Two schemes were developed, one allows for a vertical growth and the other for a horizontal unfolding of the spiral form.

Additional study of the spiral form was carried out by a group of students at the UTA School of Architecture in Texas in 1977. As a result of this work a hotel scheme was proposed, assuming the form of a Spiral tower.

The present Spiral ~~House~~, an apartment building now under construction in Ramat-Gan, Israel, is the latest attempt in exploring the helical form, for residential architecture. It is also the refined one. It assimilates the advantage of the open terrace and covered-shaded walkways, as developed in the early schemes, but rejects the ~~militarian~~ organization of the building, around a central structural and mechanical service core. Instead, the design favors central open court, enveloped by the growing Spiral ~~House~~.

- 1) Traditional Arab Flat Roof Terrace pattern.
- 2) Hexaterrace House, Ramat-Gan, 1960-63
- 3) Spiral Housing Project, 1960-1966. Vertical Scheme.
- 4) Spiral Housing, Project 1960-1966. Horizontal Scheme.
- 5) Spiral Hotel, Texas, 1977.



## THE SPIRAL

### 2. The Site

The Hill of Yad-Lebanim, town of Ramat-Gan, Israel.  
(five miles north of Tel-Aviv).

The area is a gentle hill overlooking both the Mediterranean sea and the inland range of Judean Hills, and characterized by three major architectural objects.

- B. The Water Tower, built on the top of the hill, in the late 1950's.
- A. The Hexaterrace House, built on the northern slope of the hill, in the early 1960's.
- C. The Spiralhouse (now under construction) situated alongside the main pedestrian walkway, at the foothill.

The vicinity is predominantly residential including a focus of <sup>public</sup> buildings and cultural institutions, like the city library, public art gallery, and Beit Zvi, The School of Dramatic and Cinematic art. They are situated just below the Spiralhouse on the opposite side of the main pedestrian walkway.

1. Site plan showing the three major buildings of the site:A. Hexaterrace House.  
B. Water Tower , yet unbuilt wing to the existing water reservoir and observation tower. C. The Spiralhouse.
2. Site model showing the existing public buildings in the area and the twin Spiralhouses proposal.
3. View along the pedestrian main walkway, looking towards the twin Spiralhouses.
4. Site plan, 35mm color slide.



## THE SPIRAL

### 6. Geometry and Structure.

The particular geometry of the Spiral~~house~~ allows for an orderly equilibrium between the dynamic forces (shifting the floors one above the other) and the structural pattern of the static supporting system.

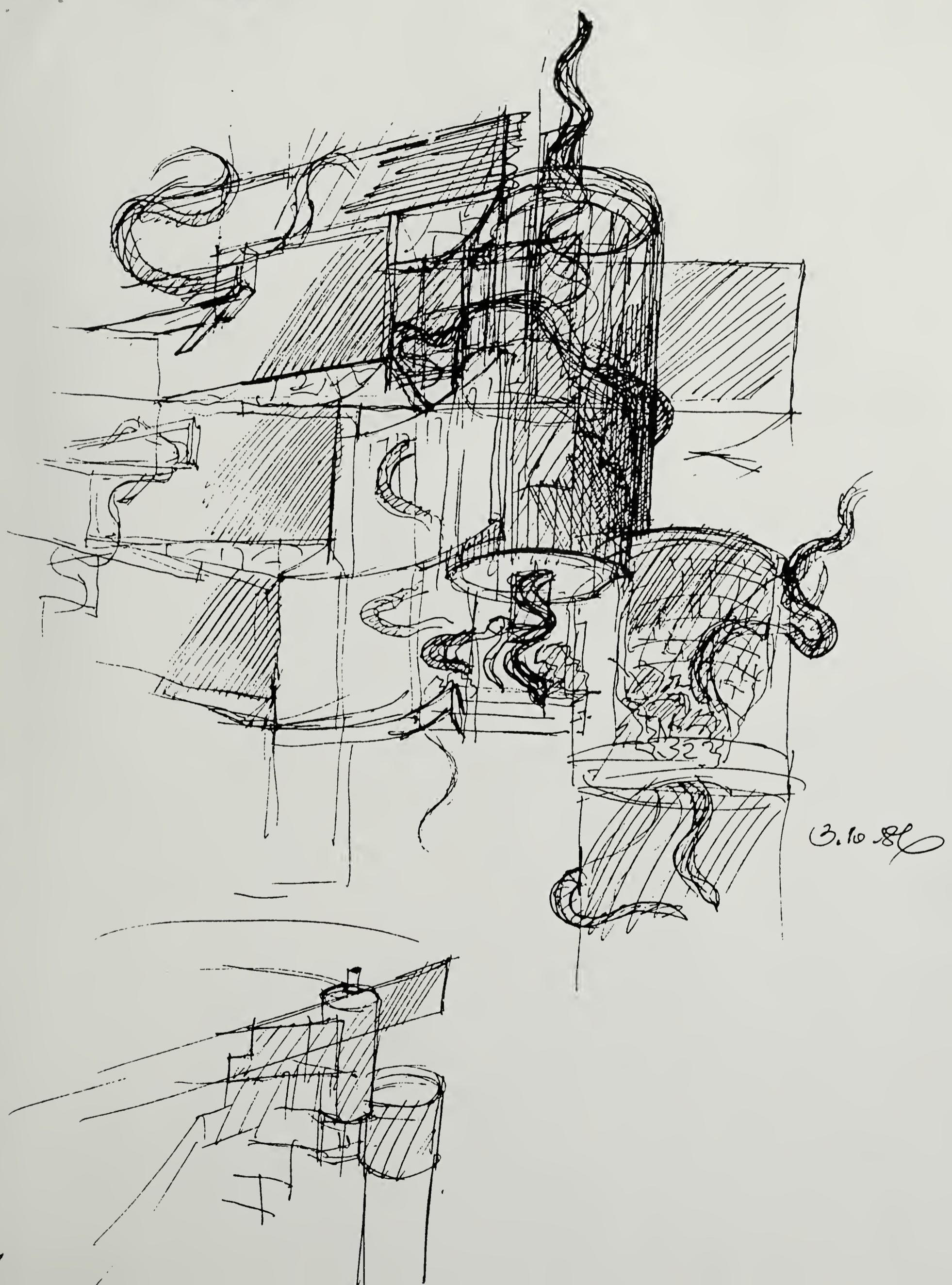
The bisecting lines of the 16-point-star and the encompassing circles, indicate the exact position of all the supporting columns and slabs.

The geometry, oriental in its character, at the same time, circular, triangular and orthogonal - addresses the problem of flexibility and fixity within an evolving quasi-organism.

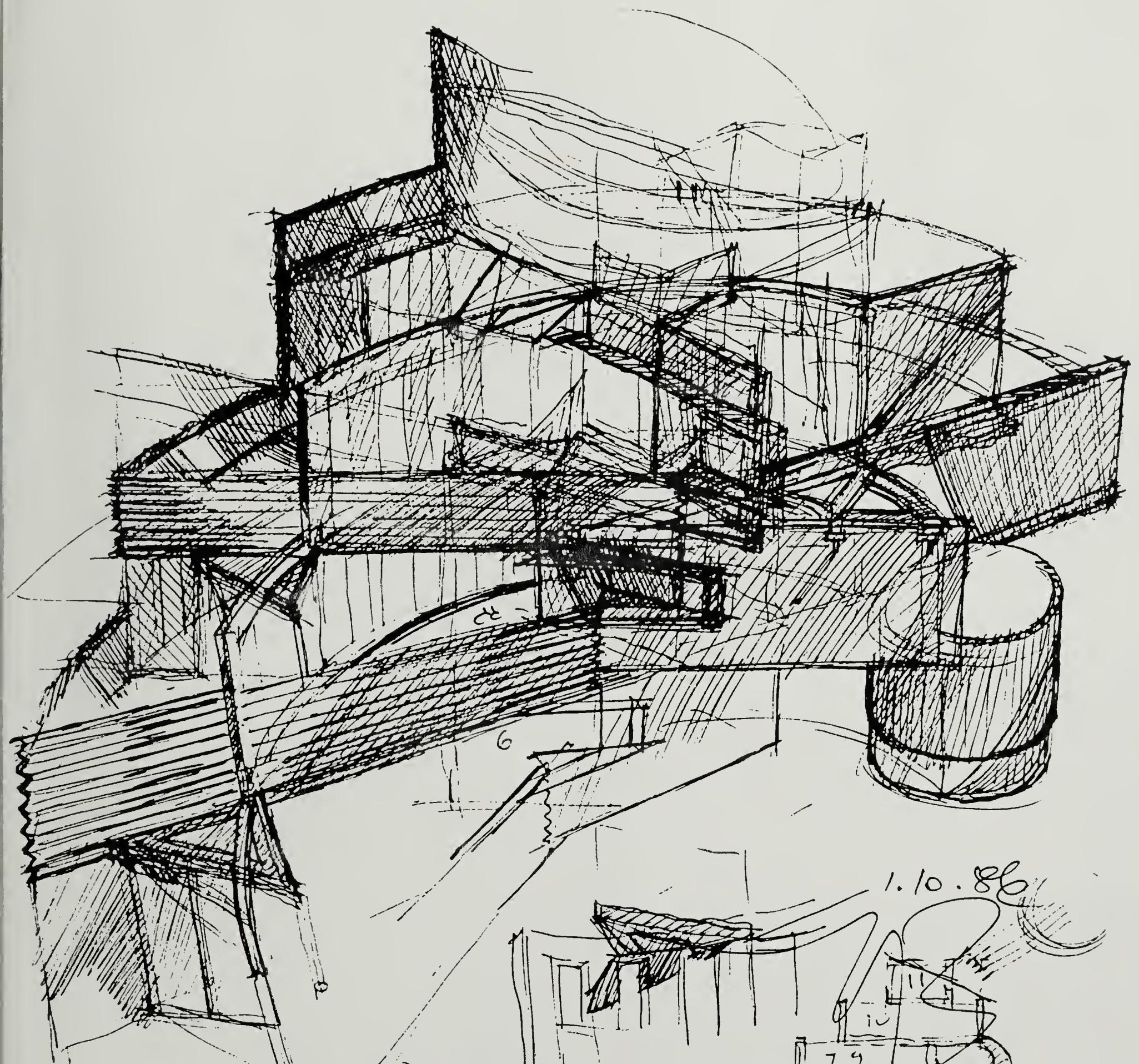
1. Spiral~~house~~, 1983 drawing showing the relation between geometry and structure.
2. Spiral~~house~~, Working Drawing scale 1:50, 4th level - study of the geometry of the ceilings over the sheltered walkways.
3. Spiral~~house~~, Plywood forms, ready for casting. Entrance hall of the Spiral-house. The geometrical pattern reflects the overall geometry of the building reduced in scale 1:5 .
4. Spiral~~house~~, foundations-plan, showing the relation between geometry of the building and its structure.
5. Moslem Geometry.

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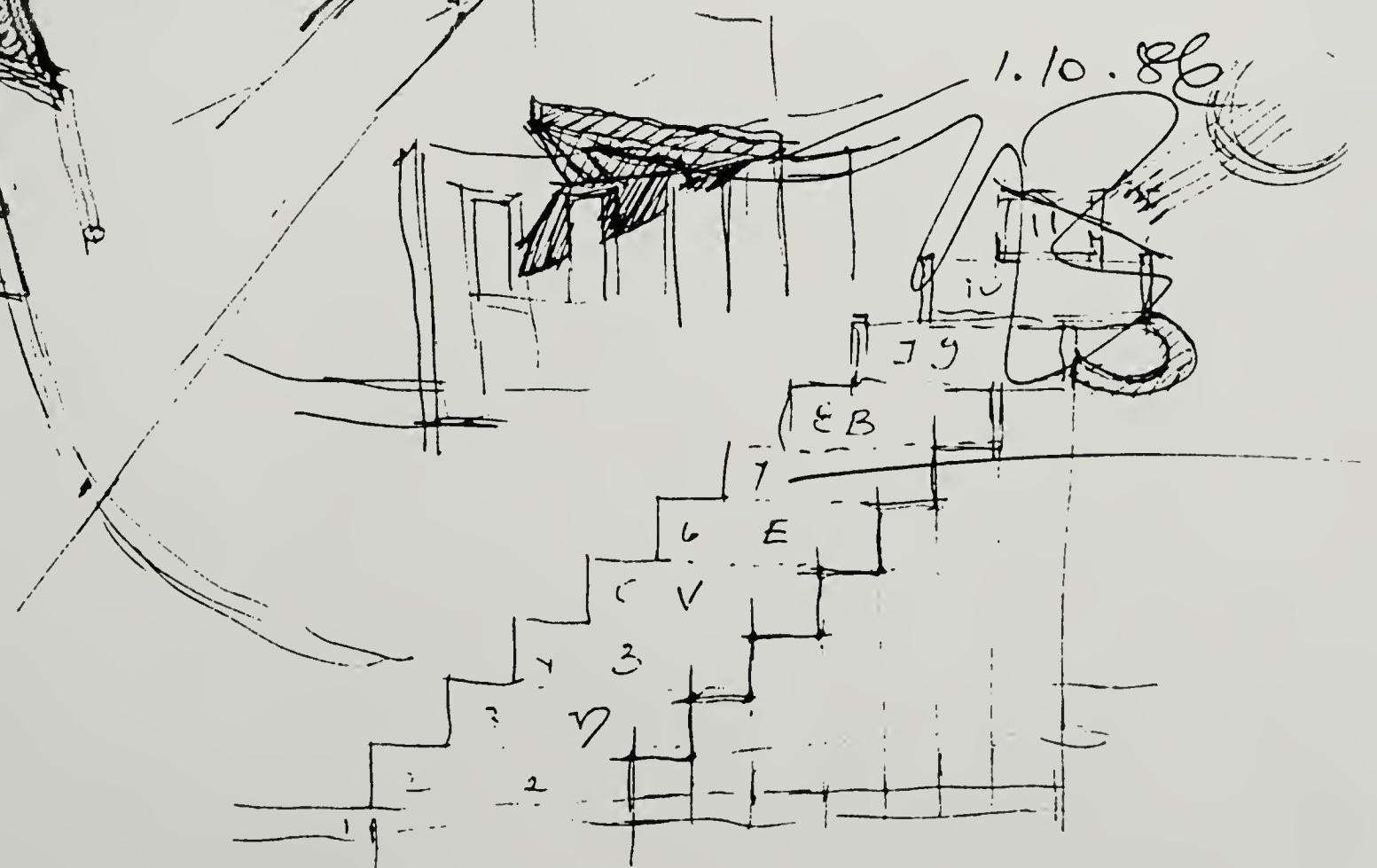




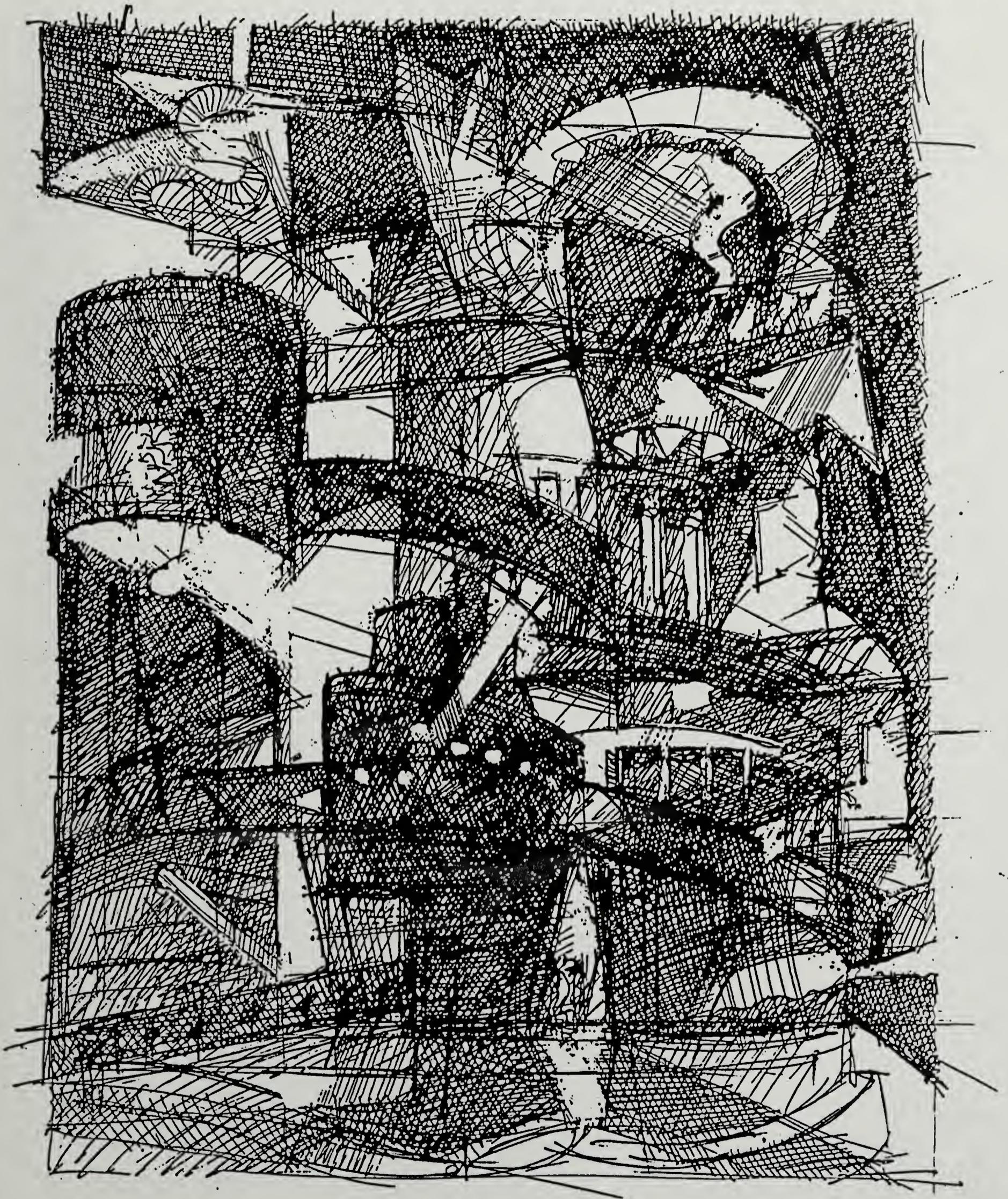




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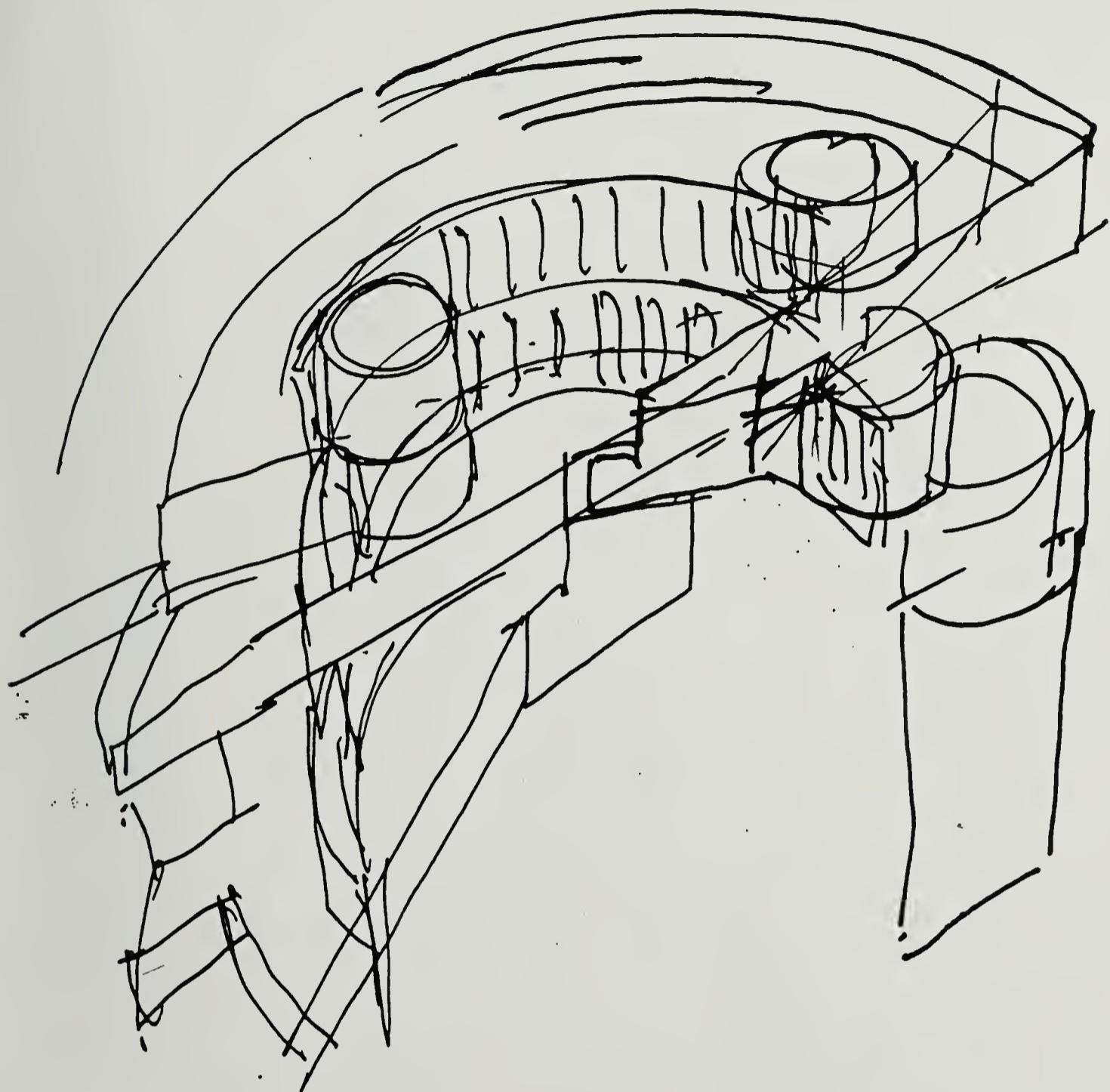






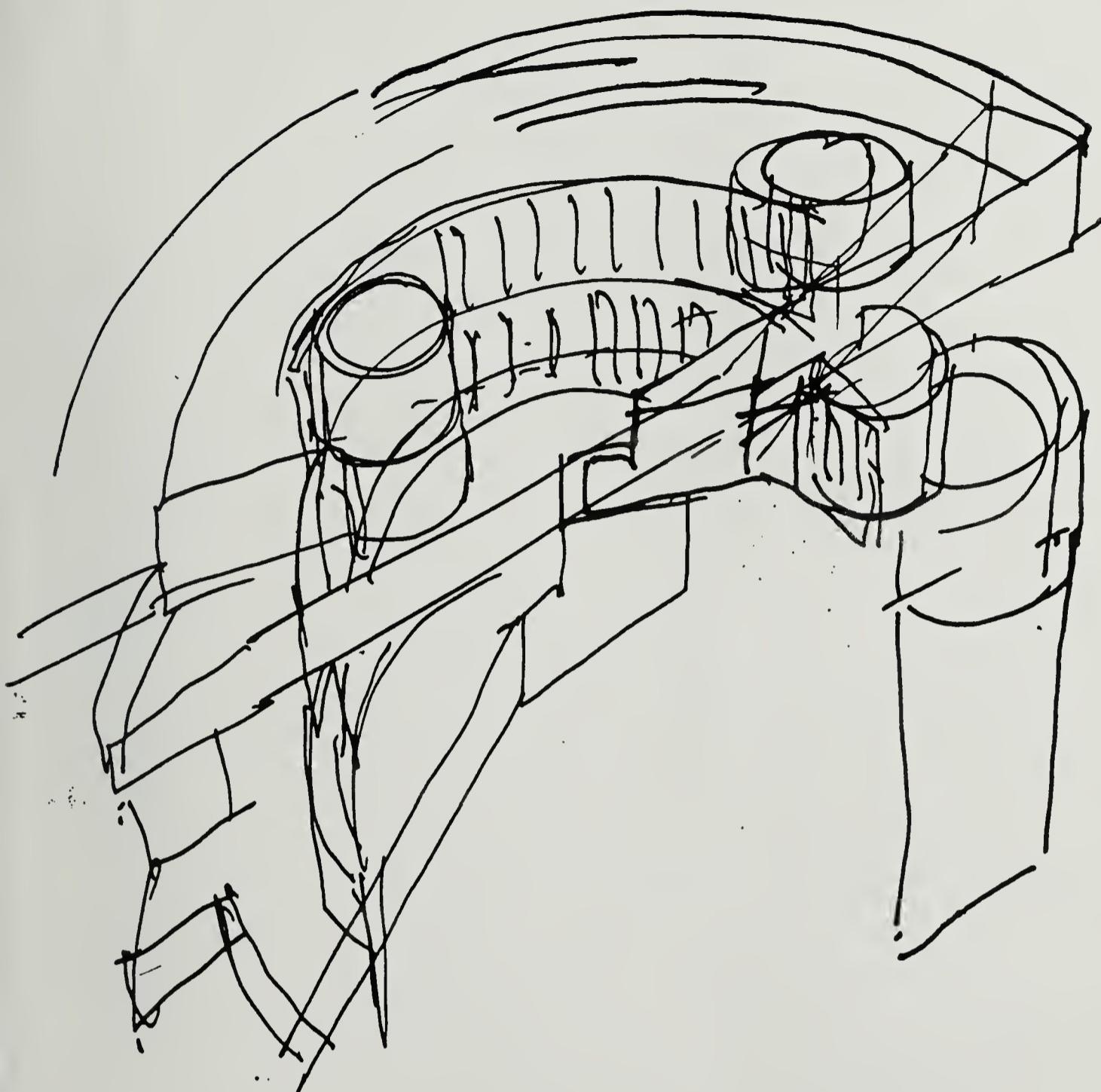
W. M. W. 1980





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